FAFSA IS FOR YOU

Funding Your Future
FAFSA- FSA ID Creation

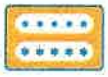
The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the key to accessing financial aid for college, career, and trade schools, including grants, scholarships, and loans. To get started, you'll need an FSA ID–a personal username and password that allows you to complete, sign, and track your FAFSA online. The steps below will guide you through creating your FSA ID, so you're ready to take the first step toward funding your future after high school!

STEP 1:
Create Your Account

- Start here: **studentaid.gov**
- Click on "Create Account" on the top right portion of the page
- Once you are on the "Create Account" page, click on "Get Started"

STEP 2:
Personal Information

- Provide you full name, date of birth, and 9-digit social security number AS THEY APPEAR on your social security card



STEP 3:
Account Information

- **Username**: If you see a message, "The username you entered is already in use" then you need to select another one.
- **Email**: Students should use a PERSONAL email, as school email will not be accessible after graduation
- **Password**: Case-sensitive, between 8 & 30 characters, including at least one uppercase and one lowercase character, and one number. Don't include personal information (date of birth, name, or social security number)

STEP 4:
Contact Information

Provide a permanent address and mobile phone number. Phone number will allow for authentication and will aid in account recovery.

STEP 5:
Communication Preferences

- Select whether you receive required communication by email (recommended) or postal mail.
- May opt-in to receive informational emails and/or text messages regarding programs for which you may be eligible.
- Select preferred language between English or Spanish

STEP 6:
Challenge Questions & Answers

- Select 4 challenge questions from the dropdown menu and write your answers. Answering your challenge questions is one way to unlock your account or retrieve your username or password
- Your answers are NOT case-sensitive

STEP 7:
Review & Agree to Terms

- Review carefully and confirm your information
- If you need to make a correction, use the "edit" button within that tile of information.
- Review and agree to FSA's terms and conditions

STEP 8:
Enable Two-Step Verification

Whenever you sign into your account, FSA will send a secure code to confirm that it is you. To protect your account, you will need to verify your phone number and email. FSA also suggest setting up an authenticator app.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Your information will be sent to the Social Security Administration (SSA) for confirmation. SSA review will take 1-3 days; you will receive a confirmation email when this is complete.

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COMPLETE THE FAFSA TODAY

FINISH THE FAFSA IN FOUR STEPS

A college education is an investment in your future, and financial aid is available to help manage the cost. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid FAFSA is the key to accessing financial aid for college, career, and trade schools, including grants, scholarships, and loans. Don't wait–complete your FAFSA today!

STEP 1: CREATE YOUR FSA ID

- Start here: **studentaid.gov** and click on "create account".
- Allow 3-5 days for the Social Security Administration to verify the FSA IDs
- Invite contributors.

STEP 2: GATHER MATERIALS

- Social Security card.
- W-2 forms and tax returns.
- Current balance of cash, checking and savings.
- Determine your dependency status.
- If you're a dependent student, you'll also need your parents' financial information.

STEP 3: FILL IT OUT

- **Check for your school's FAFSA workshop event for hands-on assistance.**
- Apply online at **FAFSA.gov.**
- Enter student and parent names as shown on Social Security cards.
- Send your FAFSA results to up to 20 campuses.
- Contributors must consent to have their Federal Tax Information (FTI) transferred to the FAFSA through the IRS.

STEP 4: SIGN AND SUBMIT

- Review your answers for errors.

2025-2026 FAFSA INFORMATION CHECKLIST

Use this section to record the essential information you'll need to bring with you for FAFSA completion events, ensuring you have everything ready for a smooth process.

- ☐ Student and parent 2023 Federal Income Tax Forms and all schedules. *Personal records or visit: irs.gov/transcript*

- ☐ Student and parent FSA ID usernames and passwords
  Create student and parent FSA IDs at studentaid.gov.
  Student: _____
  Parent: _____

- ☐ Student and parent email addresses
  Student: _____
  Parent: _____

- ☐ Student and parent Social Security numbers
  Student: _____
  Parent: _____

- ☐ Student and parent dates of birth:
  Student: ___/___/_____
  Parent 1: ___/___/_____ Parent 2: ___/___/_____

- ☐ Student and parent savings/checking account balances
  Student: $_____
  Parent: $_____

- ☐ Student and parent investments (ie. stocks, bonds, mutual funds, 529 plans, rental properties) excluding home and retirement.
  Student: $_____
  Parent: $_____

- ☐ Current net worth of all businesses
  $_____ or contact your accountant

- ☐ Child support received from 2024 $_____

- ☐ Student Alien Registration Number/USCIS Number for eligible non-citizens. Contact U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services at uscis.gov
  _____

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FAFSA- DEPENDENCY

What's Your FAFSA DEPENDENCY STATUS?

Answer 'yes' or 'no' to these questions to determine if you'll need to provide your parents' information:

YES | NO	Were you born before January 1, 2002?
YES | NO	On the day you submit your FAFSA, are you married?
YES | NO	At the beginning of the 2025-26 school year, will you be working on a master's or doctorate program (such as an M.A., M.B.A., M.D., J.D., Ph.D., Ed.D., etc.)?
YES | NO	Are you currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training (If you are a National Guard or Reserves enlistee, are you on active duty for other than state or training purposes?)?
YES | NO	Are you a veteran of the U.S. armed forces?*
YES | NO	Do you have children or other people (excluding a spouse) who live with you and who receive more than half of their support from you, now and between July 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026?
YES | NO	At any time since you turned age 13, were you an orphan (no living or adoptive biological parent), were you in foster care or were you a dependent or ward of the court?
YES | NO	As determined by a court in your state of legal residence, are you or were you a legally emancipated minor?
YES | NO	Does someone other than your parent or stepparent have legal guardianship of you, as determined by a court in your state of legal residence?
YES | NO	At any time on or after July 1, 2024, were you unaccompanied and either 1.) homeless or 2.) self-supporting and at risk of being homeless?

'Answer 'No' (you are not a veteran) if you (1) have never engaged in active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, (2) are currently an ROTC student or a cadet or midshipman at a service academy, (3) a National Guard or Reserves enlistee activated only for state or training purposes, or (4) were engaged in active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces but released under dishonorable conditions. Also answer 'No' if you are currently serving in the U.S. Armed Forces and will continue to serve through June 30, 2025.

Answer 'Yes' (you are a veteran) if you (1) have engaged in active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, or Coast Guard) or are a National Guard or Reserves enlistee who was called to active duty for other than state or training purposes, or were a cadet or midshipman at one of the service academies and (2) were released under a condition other than dishonorable. Also answer 'Yes' if you are not a veteran now but will be one by June 30, 2025.

If you answered YES to one or more of these questions, you are considered an

INDEPENDENT STUDENT

on the FAFSA. You will NOT need to provide your parents' information when completing your FAFSA application. Contact the college or university you plan to attend for more information about your dependency status.

Applicants who indicate on their FAFSA form that they have unusual circumstances and are unable to contact a parent or that contact with a parent poses a risk to the student, will be granted provisional independent status. A student may be experiencing unusual circumstances if they:

- Left home due to an abusive or threatening environment;
- Are abandoned by or estranged from their parents;
- Have refugee or asylee status and are separated from their parents, or their parents are displaced in a foreign country;
- Are a victim of human trafficking;
- Are incarcerated, or their parents are incarcerated, and contact with the parents would pose a risk to the student; or
- Are otherwise unable to contact or locate their parents.

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FAFSA- CONTRIBUTORS

Is My Parent a CONTRIBUTOR When I Fill Out My FAFSA Form?

A **parent** means your legal (biological or adoptive) parent or a person that the state has determined to be your legal parent. A **stepparent** is considered a parent if they have adopted you. Stepparents that have not adopted you will be identified as a parent spouse.

Are your biological or adoptive parents married to each other?

Your parents' marital status is married (not separated), and both of your parents' information must be included on the FAFSA form. If your parents did not file taxes jointly, then both of your parents are contributors. Their individual information, consent and approval, and signatures will be required on the FAFSA form. If your parents filed taxes jointly, only one parents is required as a contributor and will report information for both parents.

Note: Dependent students are required to report parent information on the FAFSA form, and in most cases, a parent will be identified as a contributor for these students. All contributors are required to provide their information, signatures, consent and approval to have their federal tax information transferred directly from the IRS into the FAFSA form. Being a contributor on the FAFSA form does not mean an obligation to pay for the student's education.

Do your biological or adoptive parents live together?

Your parents' marital status is unmarried (both legal parents living together), and both of your parents are contributors, even if they were never married, are divorced, or are separated. The individual information, consent and approval, and signatures will be required on the FAFSA form.

Did one parent provide more financial support than the other over the past 12 months?

The individual information, consent and approval, and signatures of the parent who provided more financial support over the past 12 months will be required on the FAFSA form and this parent will be identified as a contributor

The individual information, consent and approval, and signature of the parent who has the greater income and assets will be required on the FAFSA form, and this parent will be identified as a contributor.

Has this parent married/remarried?

Your parent's marital status is married/ remarried. Your stepparent will also be identified as a contributor on the FAFSA form if they didn't file their taxes jointly with your parent.

Your parent's marital status is single (never married), separated, divorced, or widowed. An additional parent will not be identified as contributor.